

## CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please replace the pending claims with the following listing of claims:

1. (Original) An optical fiber for transmitting light used in optical fiber communication or optical devices, wherein

at least a core region of said optical fiber is composed of tellurite glass with a zero-material dispersion wavelength equal to or greater than  $2\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ , and

said optical fiber has air holes disposed in said optical fiber in a manner that confines light in a center of said optical fiber, thereby controlling the zero dispersion wavelength in a  $1.2\text{-}1.7\text{ }\mu\text{m}$  band.

2. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a region with an area  $0.1$  to five times  $\pi\lambda^2$  at the center of said optical fiber, where  $\lambda$  is a wavelength of the light and  $\pi$  is the circular constant, wherein said air holes are disposed in an entire cross section of said optical fiber except for said region, or in locations surrounding said region in the cross section so that said region becomes the core for confining the light.

3. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 1, wherein

said tellurite glass with the zero-material dispersion wavelength equal to or greater than  $2\text{ }\mu\text{m}$  has a composition of  $\text{TeO}_2\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3\text{-LO-M}_2\text{O-N}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Q}_2\text{O}_5$ , where L is at least one of Zn, Ba and Mg, M is at least one alkaline element selected from Li, Na, K, Rb and Cs, N is at least one of B, La, Ga, Al and Y, and Q is at least one of P and Nb, and components of said tellurite glass are

$$50 < \text{TeO}_2 < 90 \text{ (mol\%)}$$

$$1 < \text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3 < 30 \text{ (mol\%)} \text{ and}$$

$$1 < \text{LO} + \text{M}_2\text{O} + \text{N}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{Q}_2\text{O}_5 < 50 \text{ (mol\%)}.$$

4. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 2, wherein

said tellurite glass with the zero-material dispersion wavelength equal to or greater than 2  $\mu\text{m}$  has a composition of  $\text{TeO}_2\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3\text{-LO-M}_2\text{O-N}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Q}_2\text{O}_5$ , where L is at least one of Zn, Ba and Mg, M is at least one alkaline element selected from Li, Na, K, Rb and Cs, N is at least one of B, La, Ga, Al and Y, and Q is at least one of P and Nb, and components of said tellurite glass are

$$50 < \text{TeO}_2 < 90 \text{ (mol\%)}$$

$$1 < \text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3 < 30 \text{ (mol\%)} \text{ and}$$

$$1 < \text{LO} + \text{M}_2\text{O} + \text{N}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{Q}_2\text{O}_5 < 50 \text{ (mol\%)}.$$

5. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 3, wherein said tellurite material glass is doped with at least one type of rare-earth ions selected from  $\text{Ce}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Pr}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Nd}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Pm}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Sm}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Tb}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Dy}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Ho}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Er}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Tm}^{3+}$  and  $\text{Yb}^{3+}$ .

6. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 4, wherein said tellurite material glass is doped with at least one type of rare-earth ions selected from  $\text{Ce}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Pr}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Nd}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Pm}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Sm}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Tb}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Dy}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Ho}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Er}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Tm}^{3+}$  and  $\text{Yb}^{3+}$ .

7. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 1, wherein said optical fiber is composed of tellurite glass and comprises: a core region; a first cladding section that is formed in such a manner as to enclose said core region, and has a plurality of air holes in a circumferential direction of said core region and along an axial direction of said core region; and a second cladding section that is formed in such a manner as to enclose said first cladding section, and has a refractive index approximately equal to an equivalent refractive index of said first cladding section.

8. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 3, wherein said optical fiber is composed of tellurite glass and comprises: a core region; a first cladding section that is formed in such a manner as to enclose said core region, and has a plurality of air holes in a circumferential direction of said core region and along an axial direction of said core region; and a second cladding section that is formed in such a manner as to enclose said first cladding section, and has a refractive index approximately equal to an equivalent refractive index of said first cladding section.

9. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 6, wherein said optical fiber is composed of tellurite glass and comprises: a core region; a first cladding section that is formed in such a manner as to enclose said core region, and has a plurality of air holes in a circumferential direction of said core region and along an axial direction of said core region; and a second cladding section that is formed in such a manner as to enclose said first cladding section, and has a refractive index approximately equal to an equivalent refractive index of said first cladding section.

10. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 7-9~~ claim 7, wherein said air holes of said first cladding section are formed at fixed intervals along the circumferential direction of said core region.

11. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 7-9~~ claim 7, wherein said air holes of said first cladding section are formed in a multilayer fashion in a radial direction of said first cladding section.

12. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 7-9~~ claim 7, wherein said air holes of said first cladding section are filled with a material having a refractive index lower than a refractive index of said second cladding section.

13. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 7-9~~ claim 7, wherein said core region has a refractive index higher than a refractive index of a material of said first cladding section.

14. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 7-9~~ claim 7, wherein a relative refractive-index difference between said core region and said first cladding section is equal to or greater than 2%.

15. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 7-9~~ claimed 7, wherein a central section to become said core has tellurite glass, a refractive index of which differs from the refractive index of said tellurite glass, embedded in said central section.

16. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 2-6~~ claim 2, wherein a central section of a region to become said core has air holes formed in said central section.

17. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 2, wherein said air holes are disposed in one of triangular lattice-like, quadrilateral lattice-like, and honeycomb geometries.

18. (Original) The optical fiber as claimed in claim 2, wherein said air holes have one of geometries of circular cylinder, elliptical prism and polygonal prism.

19. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 2-6~~ claim 2, wherein a number of said air holes is three, and a diameter of a region to become said core is 0.6-6.5  $\mu\text{m}$ .

20. (Currently amended) The optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 2-6~~ claim 2, wherein a number of said air holes is four, and a diameter of a region to become said core is 0.6-5  $\mu\text{m}$ .

21. (Original) A fabrication method of the optical fiber using as a core material tellurite glass that has the zero-material dispersion wavelength equal to or greater than 2  $\mu\text{m}$  and has a composition of  $\text{TeO}_2\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3\text{-LO-M}_2\text{O-N}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Q}_2\text{O}_5$ , where L is at least one of Zn, Ba and Mg, M is at least one alkaline element selected from Li, Na, K, Rb and Cs, N is at least one of B, La, Ga, Al and Y, and Q is at least one of P and Nb, and components of said tellurite glass are

$$50 < \text{TeO}_2 < 90 \text{ (mol\%)}$$

$$1 < \text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3 < 30 \text{ (mol\%) and}$$

$1 < \text{LO} + \text{M}_2\text{O} + \text{N}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{Q}_2\text{O}_5 < 50 \text{ (mol\%)}$ , wherein said fabrication method of the optical fiber comprises:

a first process of forming a preform by cast molding tellurite glass melt into a mold having a plurality of portions to become convex on the inner wall; and

a second process of inserting said glass preform produced in said first process into a hollow cylindrical jacket tube composed of tellurite glass, and of carrying out fiber drawing under pressure with maintaining or enlarging air holes in a gap between said glass preform and said jacket tube.

22. (Original) A fabrication method of the optical fiber using as a core material tellurite glass that has the zero-material dispersion wavelength equal to or greater than 2  $\mu\text{m}$  and has a composition of  $\text{TeO}_2\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3\text{-LO-M}_2\text{O-N}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Q}_2\text{O}_5$ , where L is at least one of Zn, Ba and Mg, M is at least one alkaline element selected from Li, Na, K, Rb and Cs, N is at least one of B, La, Ga, Al and Y, and Q is at least one of P and Nb, and components of said tellurite glass are

$$50 < \text{TeO}_2 < 90 \text{ (mol\%)}$$

$$1 < \text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3 < 30 \text{ (mol\%) and}$$

$1 < \text{LO} + \text{M}_2\text{O} + \text{N}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{Q}_2\text{O}_5 < 50 \text{ (mol\%)}$ , wherein said fabrication method of the optical fiber comprises:

a first process of forming a preform by cast molding tellurite glass melt into a mold having a plurality of portions to become convex on the inner wall which is conically enlarged towards a bottom of said inner wall;

a second process of forming a glass preform by injecting glass melt of core glass composed of tellurite glass, and by suction molding the core glass conically by volume contraction of the cladding glass; and

a third process of inserting said glass preform produced by said second process into a hollow cylindrical jacket tube composed of tellurite glass, and of carrying out fiber drawing under pressure with maintaining or enlarging air holes in a gap between said glass preform and said jacket tube.

23. (Original) A fabrication method of the optical fiber using as a core material tellurite glass that has the zero-material dispersion wavelength equal to or greater than 2  $\mu\text{m}$  and has a composition of  $\text{TeO}_2\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3\text{-LO-M}_2\text{O-N}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Q}_2\text{O}_5$ , where L is at least one of Zn, Ba and Mg, M is at least one alkaline element selected from Li, Na, K, Rb and Cs, N is at least one of B, La, Ga, Al and Y, and Q is at least one of P and Nb, and components of said tellurite glass are

$$50 < \text{TeO}_2 < 90 \text{ (mol\%)}$$

$$1 < \text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3 < 30 \text{ (mol\%) and}$$

$1 < \text{LO} + \text{M}_2\text{O} + \text{N}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{Q}_2\text{O}_5 < 50 \text{ (mol\%)}$ , wherein said fabrication method of the optical fiber comprises:

a first process of forming a preform by cast molding tellurite glass melt into a mold that has a plurality of portions to become convex on the inner wall which is conically enlarged towards a bottom of said inner wall, and that has a hole in the bottom of said mold;

a second process of forming a glass preform by injecting glass melt of core glass composed of tellurite glass, and by suction molding the core glass conically by volume contraction of the cladding glass and by causing the cladding glass to flow out of said hole; and

a third process of inserting said glass preform produced by said second process into a hollow cylindrical jacket tube composed of tellurite glass, and of carrying out fiber drawing under pressure with maintaining or enlarging air holes in a gap between said glass preform and said jacket tube.



24. (Currently amended) The fabrication method of the optical fiber as claimed in ~~any one of claims 21-23~~ claim 21, wherein said mold has four portions convex on the inner wall, and the cladding of said optical fiber has four air holes.

25. (Original) The fabrication method of the optical fiber as claimed in claim 23, wherein said second process carries out vacuum degassing through said hole to cause said cladding glass to flow out of said hole.

26. (Original) A fabrication method of the optical fiber using as a core material tellurite glass that has the zero-material dispersion wavelength equal to or greater than 2  $\mu\text{m}$  and has a composition of  $\text{TeO}_2\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3\text{-LO-M}_2\text{O-N}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Q}_2\text{O}_5$ , where L is at least one of Zn, Ba and Mg, M is at least one alkaline element selected from Li, Na, K, Rb and Cs, N is at least one of B, La, Ga, Al and Y, and Q is at least one of P and Nb, and components of said tellurite glass are

$$50 < \text{TeO}_2 < 90 \text{ (mol\%)}$$

$$1 < \text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3 < 30 \text{ (mol\%) and}$$

$1 < \text{LO} + \text{M}_2\text{O} + \text{N}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{Q}_2\text{O}_5 < 50 \text{ (mol\%)}$ , wherein said fabrication method of the optical fiber comprises:

a first process of forming a cylindrical glass block by cast molding tellurite glass melt into a mold;

a second process of forming a glass preform having air holes by boring holes in a longitudinal direction of said glass block formed in said first process; and

a third process of inserting said glass preform produced by said second process into a hollow cylindrical jacket tube composed of tellurite glass, and of carrying out fiber drawing under pressure with maintaining or enlarging air holes in a gap between said glass preform and said jacket tube.

27. (Original) A fabrication method of the optical fiber using as a core material tellurite glass that has the zero-material dispersion wavelength equal to or greater than 2  $\mu\text{m}$  and has a composition of  $\text{TeO}_2\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3\text{-LO-M}_2\text{O-N}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Q}_2\text{O}_5$ , where L is at least one of Zn, Ba and Mg, M is at least one alkaline element selected from Li, Na, K, Rb and Cs, N is at least one of B, La, Ga, Al and Y, and Q is at least one of P and Nb, and components of said tellurite glass are

$$50 < \text{TeO}_2 < 90 \text{ (mol\%)}$$

$$1 < \text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3 < 30 \text{ (mol\%) and}$$

$1 < \text{LO} + \text{M}_2\text{O} + \text{N}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{Q}_2\text{O}_5 < 50 \text{ (mol\%)}$ , wherein said fabrication method of the optical fiber comprises:

a first process of forming a preform having air holes formed by cast molding tellurite glass melt into a mold having a jig including a plurality of cylindrical rodlike pins disposed on a base inside the mold, followed by extracting said jig; and

a second process of inserting said glass preform produced in said first process into a hollow cylindrical jacket tube composed of tellurite glass, and of carrying out fiber drawing under pressure with maintaining or enlarging the air holes in a gap between said glass preform and said jacket tube.

28. (New) The fabrication method of the optical fiber as claimed in claim 22, wherein said mold has four portions convex on the inner wall, and the cladding of said optical fiber has four air holes.

29. (New) The fabrication method of the optical fiber as claimed in claim 23, wherein said mold has four portions convex on the inner wall, and the cladding of said optical fiber has four air holes.